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/Information on supernatural beings, spirits and gods appearing in Tucano tales will be found in category 539. See Category 116, pp. 1-41./

/321 cont./

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[353]
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/footnote 6 cont./ idols of gold and silver in the form of women, and many objects of gold and silver for the service of the sun" (o.c. 67).

Carvajal, however, is relating what he heard and his narration is all impregnated with unbelievable things, fruit of credulity and of suggestion.

Pe. Alonso de Rojas, describing the descent of the year 1637, testifies: "They do not have rites or ceremonies to venerate them (their false gods), neither temples of their idols nor priests" (Descobrimentos, /Discoveries/, 110). Precisely as we found them three centuries later.

346 nor persons in charge of the cult, neither priests nor religious ceremonies and prayers to honor the deity, are found among them.

771 /322/ There are, indeed, many superstitions, and it could not be otherwise among men of so little culture. There is unanimity in asserting that, if there is a cult, it is that of the

• 776 Jurupari or demon (7)

7. In his "Diálogos das grandezas do Brazil /Dialogues on the greatnesses of Brazil/," Teixeira Pinto, dealing with the rites of the heathen, asserts: "If they do have any and if they practice some manner of worship, although this is not known, it is the devil to whom they give the name of Jurupari" (ap. Barbosa Rodrigues, Poranduba Amazonense /Amazonian History/, 94). Jurupari and dabacuri are terms from the Lingua Geral or Nheengatú, which is still spoken on all the

/322 cont./

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• 776

/footnote 7 cont./ Rio Negro. The use of these terms by the Indians of the Uaupés themselves, when they describe their traditions to us, is of value as proof of the foreign influence in their myths and rites.

(in Tukano Wɨ̃x-tĩ), who is celebrated or understood to be placated with the Dabacurís (in Tukano Poosé), in order for him not to harm them, malicious spirit that he is. As for God (in Tukano Wá:kõ or O'ɨ̃-kõ) he is a great absent one, who does not concern himself about human beings and is without any influence on their life. There is, then, no need to be interested in Wá:kõ or to think of him in order to worship him.

The study of these tribes convinces us that they are in a phase of great regression or involution, with traces of totemism, its little religious feeling and great preponderance of magic being shown to us by them.

121 Religion in a subjective sense is, according to W. Schmidt, Manuale di Stória comparata delle Religioni /Handbook of the Comparative History of Religions/, p. 2), "the idea and feeling of dependence on a supraterrestrial personal Power, with whom it is /323/ intended to enter into relations"; and, objectively, it is "the conjunction of exterior acts in which religion is expressed and by which it is manifested." We shall consider it especially in this sense.

Let us examine separately for better apprehension of the indications of this weak religious feeling and its exact comprehension: 1st. its doctrinal points; 2nd. its cult practices; 3rd. its rules of moral, religious, and social behavior.

d) Doctrinal points.

776 1) Concept of a Supreme Being.

a) The totality of the Indians of these tribes living in the povoados on the bank of the Brazilian rivers Uaupés, Tiquié, and Papurí distinguish at the present time, as they did a century ago,

/323 cont./

• 776 in the time of Wallace, a God Creator and Supreme Rewarder, perfect and good, and call him Wã:kõ (or O'ã-kõ), and an evil spirit that can cause them much harm, and for this reason they fear him, this is Wãx-tĩ. Not only some students and travelers, but also the natives of the younger generation themselves, identify Wãx-tĩ with the Juruparí of the Língua Geral or Nheengatú and the demon himself (8).

8. On the bank of the river Uaupés, above Chibarú, there is a place called Juruparí-ponta, and those of the Tukano language call it Wãx-tĩ nõã, thus identifying Wãx-tĩ and Jurupari.

771 Confronted with this information, one might think that their religion was a Manichaeism, with a double principle: -- the good, which practically does not need to be taken into account, and the evil (9).

9. Concerning this subject, we naturally have to exclude the Indians who have attended the schools of the Salesian Missions for several years and received a more profound and sound religious knowledge, strengthened, besides, by an intense religious and sacramental practical life.

776 Without, for now, questioning the names, it is certain that they admit the existence of a personal Being ("maxsã," people, as they express themselves), a being who has always existed, much superior to human beings, who lives up above. The old [177] people call this Being Bĩxpó, the Thunder (thus, for example, old Gabriel Costa of Parí-cachoeira, river Tiquié), and those who have some notion of Christianity clarify this by saying that

/323 cont./
• 776 it is "Deus Pai" /God the Father/ (10).
197
[115]

10. The young Patrícia Vasconcelos, Christian and alumna of the Salesian Mission, talking to her old uncle and pajé, Marco, from S. Luzia, river Papurí, while speaking about the Padre Eterno /Eternal Father/ (Father of Jesus Christ), heard him interrupt her: "Well, my daughter, this is Bũxpó."

*[192] It is to be pointed out that the term of the Língua Geral for indicating Deus /God/ is Tupana, a simple variation, probably introduced by the catechesis, of the name Tupã, which means Trovão /Thunder/. It would not be a mere /324/ coincidence of names. But either both human groups, that of Nheengatú and that of the Tukano, had the same beliefs and cult; or there was a borrowing of beliefs, or at least of legends.

[115] Some add that the world and the human beings came from this Supreme Being as a result of a simple creative word. This is what we obtained in talking with the old people of different tribes and in different localities, even from those who are not Christians and do not maintain contact with the Missionaries, and probably represents their primitive tradition, because it moreover corresponds to what is narrated by the legends.

776 b) Among the Tukano of the river Tiquié, Padre Eduardo
*[192] Lagório, Salesian, found the belief in a God and a Goddess, who existed per se, that is, were not [illegible]ated by another, "kã õaró, by the will," as they express it in their idiom; and she, too, "ko õaró." Contrary to the native psychology, which is not bound up with the woman, whose physical qualities do not give her any more value, the Indian, who in his realistic pragmatism seems unconcerned about the aesthetic qualities of persons, dwells, on the other hand, on describing the beauty of this goddess. It seems to us, for this reason, permissible to search for a Christian origin for such a fact, to wit, the cult and homage

/324 cont./
• 776 to the Holy Mother of God (11).

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[177]

11. The Indian Sebastião Mariano, of the Yuruparí-tapúya tribe (Arwáke of the Içana) narrated to us in Carará-poço (river Içana), in August of 1957, the legend of Kóay, which he identified and translated as Juruparí, called son of Yaperikuli. And to our question about what his mother was called, he immediately responded "Santa Maria" /Holy Mary/.

*[192] They call God O'ĩ-kõ, but they did not know the meaning of this word. According to the spirit of the Tukano language, it could be a word made up of o'ĩ, bone, and the ending of max-kõ, son. Therefore O'ĩ-kõ means "Son of the bone." They laughed when we gave this translation and added the very common: "that is so," "that is so." Accordingly (or "by analogy") they call the Goddess O'ĩ-kó or O'ĩ-kõ. O'ĩ-kõ means "daughter of the bone" (from O'ĩ, bone and max-kõ, daughter); O'ĩ-kó, as is more commonly heard, would mean "mother of the bone" (derived from pax-kó, mother), suggesting that this would be mother of Oĩ-kõ.

It is not a matter of a couple as a model of the human family, however, as among other peoples, or the deification of the progenitors of the group. Oĩ-kõ does not beget divine or human children; he creates the one and the other.

It was by invitation of O'ĩ-kõ or Oĩ-kó, so they informed Pe. Lagório, that O'ĩ-kõ came down to earth and there created mountains, rivers, forests, animals, and, at the last, the human beings.

*[192] /325/ c) Oĩ-kõ, according to legends obtained by us (and which will be studied more fully in another work), is a personage betrayed by his wife, mahĩwi (the pirárara /a fish/); and he, in turn, preferred his sister-in-law to his own wife. It is true, the personage who made the tribes come out of the opening of

776 /325 cont./
Urubucuára, Yepásonyá, is also called Yepa-O'ã-kõ, and some of the old Christians call this one "Son of God."

Each tribe has its legends which express these doctrinal points, as will be seen in another work.

2) Immortality of the soul.

774 Another truth well established among the tribes of the Uaupés is that of the existence and immortality of the soul. This truth, however, is starting to be contaminated by metempsychosis and confused with the existence of spirits disincarnated or that never were incarnated.

*[192] They admit in man, besides the body, õxpõ, another invisible element which animates it and survives after the death of the individual. The natives of the younger generation (therefore the possibility of this being a term learned in catechesis is not excluded) designate it with the same term that indicates the heart, that is, héri-põra (Uaupés héri-põna) (12).

[115] 12. The veteran Salesian Missionary, Pe. João Marchesi, who speaks Tukano fluently, says that he does not remember having heard mentioned another element or "sombra da pessoa" /shadow of the person/, as some primitive peoples believe. In the Tukano language, "sombra"/shadow/ would be called "bahusé," that is, "thing that appears."

*[192] The old ones, however, do not know how to give any clarification about héri-põra; they never use this term to designate the incorporeal element. They call this only wãx-tĩ (13).

*192 797 774 13. Cf. below, VII-4, g (3), what is said about the wãx-tĩ of the dead. The Catechesis has been using the term héri-põra (or héri-põna, as it is pronounced on the Uaupés and

/328 cont./

775 The belief in a social life beyond the grave, similar to the present life, with fishing trips and feasts, is still vigorous, as is shown by categorical answers (20).

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20. A little girl interrupted a Religious, who, explaining the Catechism, spoke of heaven, in order to ask whether there were fish there in heaven. Taken by surprise, the Professora answered no. The child added promptly: -- Then I do not want to go there.

Some even think that in the other life there is procreation of children (21).

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21. A Missionary relates the following: "Once a lad was very surprised to hear that in heaven there will be a plenitude of life, without need for propagation of the species. He asked, almost disappointed: 'Then there in heaven will there not be any women for us?' "

5) Existence of the spirits.

776 They believe in the existence of spirits that never were incarnated in a human body and never will be; they can, nevertheless, become visible in certain circumstances. Such spirits live in certain places: in the interior of the forests, headwaters of the igarapés, caves, stones, etc.

There are many of them, and different categories, each category with its characteristic way of presenting itself. The description as the Indians bring it to us, however, is not unanimous. And some affirm that they see them or hear them with relative frequency. It is an unquestionable fact that they become

/328 cont./

• 776

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alarmed easily enough, either individuals or entire groups (22).

22. In the Schools, for example, if a child (more frequently the girls; it is to be noted that it is the women who claim to have seen them more often) yells Wãx-tĩ at night in the dormitory, all of them are filled with panic, cover their faces or turn them to the other side. But also in full /this footnote is continued on the next page in the original source/ daylight they will claim to have seen Wãx-tĩ. A similar event happened in Iauareté during the day, and a little girl threw herself from the upper floor of the Mission building. One of the Salesian Missionaries of Taracuá, Valério Fernandes, was with some little boys in the forest, looking for cucura (a fruit). Some women who were nearby and had not been seen by the boys also desired this fruit. The children went helter-skelter, yelling: "Wãx-tĩ" and ran until they came out of the forest, in spite of the calls of the Missionary. The episodes about which we were better able to ask questions are all explained by suggestion. We heard of other episodes brought about by way of experiment, in order to verify the native belief and suggestability. Even though one later tried to prove this to the Indian, he would not believe it and continues to acknowledge that it was really the spirit.

as if they had seen something extraordinary.

/329/ Some of these spirits are tremendously malevolent and harmful, and others, not. Some admit that they are of the two sexes and multiply like human beings.

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776 a) Wãx-tĩ or Juruparí (23).

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23. The young Tukano Casimiro Sampaio gave (1949) this contradictory information: "The Wãx-tĩ live in society. They make noise. They do not appear. They do not do any harm. /The final quotation marks are missing./ This subject about the spirits will be more fully developed in the book "Lendas do Uaupés /Legends of the Uaupés/."

He lives in the interior of the forests, in the darkest places and in the abandoned huts. He appears, however, even in the malocas, in the form of a black man, hairy, ugly, covered with ashes. A Tukano informant (Doroteia Brito) said that: "When he makes himself seen in some house, it is a sign of sicknesses that will come. He likes to strangle chickens. When the broad hen makes noise, it is because Wãx-tĩ moved it." At any noise that they hear in the house or in the forest, they immediately think of Wãx-tĩ. A strange animal that they see, a figure, it must be he, and they yell, full of fear.

*[192] [822] They attribute the echo, axkã-keoãrõ, to Wãx-tĩ, who is imitating some sound. It seems to them on many occasions that they hear in the noises of the forest and the cachoeiras, and in the whispering of the winds, faraway echoes of the songs and dances performed by Wãx-tĩ.

It is to be noted that Wãx-tĩ is not an individual; there are many of them; rather it is an entire class. Among them one par excellence, who would be the principal one. This one, especially in the origin of the nation, did them much harm: he stole the children, impregnated their women, and did other evil things to them, killed the men, etc. Tired, finally, of their /the next line in the original source properly belongs on the next page and is repeated there; it is therefore omitted here in the translation/ yoke, because, besides so many bad things, he forced them into tasks and very difficult demonstrations, the men got

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together, caught him, tied him up with cipos, and burned him. According to one legend narrated by the paje Vicente Rodrigues of the Taryana tribe and other /330/ Arwake narrators, it was O'ɨ-kõ who burned Wɨx-tʃ, also called Bisiu. From the ashes, in this same place, there grew two paxiúbas /palms/, waxtá (24).

24. It is to be noted that the name of the paxiuba in Tukano, waxtá, reminds one of that of Wɨx-tʃ. From the same root, wax, we have the term that indicates the hernia truss or loincloth, waxsó-ro, the wɨx-tʃ-kẽõ, tipitʃ or the press with which they squeeze the mass of mandioca to make the flour, objects that, like the sacred instruments, were a gift from Wɨx-tʃ. It should be noted that it is also from paxiúba that they make the parís and cacurís for fishing, and, not infrequently, also the walls of the malocas.

with which they make the sacred instrument called mɨ̃ɨ̃ʃ (Uaupés mɨ̃hʃ or Juruparí (25)

25. As for the etymology of the term Juruparí, Stradelli (Vocabulário Nheengatú-português, entry Jurupari) recalled to an Indian that someone had told him Juruparí meant "the one produced from the fruit." The Indian answered him: "imtimɨ̃ɨ̃, Iuruparí, céra onheẽn putáre o munha iarié iurú parí uá, no, not at all, the name of Juruparí means the one that made the closing of our mouth" (iurú, mouth, and parí, enclosure for fishing; cf. 5, a (2b) /Ch. VI/).

in the Língua Geral) in memory of the great feat. So some of their legends say, and with this they identify Wɨx-tʃ with the personage Juruparí of the Tupí legends.

/330 cont./

776 Even burned, his spirit still survives, wandering through the forests, taking strange and frightening shapes. To him they attribute all the misfortunes, both the material ones, such as a storm, the destruction of the forest (26),

> 26. Large clearings are frequently found in the forest. It is a matter of tall and thick trees, but with superficial roots, which fall under the force of the hurricanes, dragging many others with them. They attribute this noise and the falling of the trees to Wãx-tʃ.

a harmful animal in the clearing, and the personal ones: the
192 defect of stuttering, madness, etc. They call the mad person
753 Wãx-tʃ dohõnõkõ, that is, hurt by Wãx-tʃ. They call tuber-
776 culosis Wãx-tʃ poá-ri, hair /Port. cabelos/ of Wãx-tʃ (27).

> 27. The cause of tuberculosis, according to what they think, is butterfly hairs /Port. pêlos, hairs, down, colors/ in the throat. The paje blows on the mingau in order to invoke the "Wãx-tʃ of the butterflies," so that it will not trouble the patient.

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776 The fear of Wãx-tʃ that they feel is such that not for any prize will they venture to enter the forest at night, or even during the day in certain dark igarapés. And they go so far as to abandon their clearings for years, because they heard strange noises there.

191 b) Boraró or Curupira (28).

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> 28. Through relations with the travelers (many of whom speak Nheengatú) the natives know many terms of the língua geral. Just

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/footnote 28 cont./ as they identify Wɨ̃x-tʃ with Jurupari, so too many of them, to the question: -- who is Boraró? answer at once: he is Curupira.

776 He also lives in the middle of the forest, which is his kingdom, in the sierras or on the headwaters of the igarapés; never in the open places.

*[192] They conceive him as a large and deformed monkey. He emits strange cries in the forest and gives great smacks or blows on the trees, /331/ especially the sapupemas (flat roots) of the sumaúna /ceiba tree/. He attacks the careless one who ventures into the forest, poisoning him with his urine and sucking out his brains. No weapon succeeds in killing him. He eats onça /jaguar/ and animals, and also sucks the blood of human beings. When he wants to suck the blood, he does it in the following manner: first he hits the place, so as to anesthetize it, afterwards he makes the puncture; when he has finished sucking, he blows in order to fill with air the emptiness left. If someone says: "I was sucked" (that is, to mention the appearance of Boraró), he will die.

[115] Dorotéia Brito attests that her grandfather saw Boraró many times. "He plants the clearing, has a wife and children. In the clearing, during the day, words are heard; it is Boraró who is speaking, although he is not seen. He appears as a man, with hair falling over his shoulders, with a red flower in his mouth. He further takes the form of a woman and a boy. He does nothing to the Makú, and is fond of the monkeys. Anyone who has seen him will become ill." He sucked the brains from her aunt, in the clearing, and she died there, a mark on her head remaining as proof.

[115] Another Tukano girl, Kõmɨ̃-ro põrã́, from the povoado of S. Luzia (river Papurí), states that twice, when she was looking for fruit in the forest a little above S. Luzia, she heard Boraró make a loud noise, as if he had made a shot. On another

/331 cont./

776 [192] occasion, while looking for caraná in the company of a cousin, both saw two huge tracks of almost half a meter. Her cousin explained to her that they were the footprints of Boraró, Boraró dõ'pó-kãrĩ.

Boraró, the same witness stated, "always has some animals that accompany him and sing near him." These animals are called Boraró i'á, lice of Boraró. "When they hear singing in the forest: -- moláro... (with the a very prolonged) moláro... (29),

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29. It must be pointed out that the pronunciation moláro announces the origin of the informant. The Tukano language, as can be observed in its better pronunciation on the river Tiquié, does not have the phoneme l. Under the influence of the other tribes, mainly the Taryana, on the Uaupés and Papurí, one hears l in some words. Moláro, we think, in accord with the spirit of the Tukano language, is a corruption of the name Boraró.

they all run away, because Boraró is very near. /The final quotation marks are missing./

[115] According to Casimiro Sampaio -- "Boraró lives in the forest. He appears as a white man (30),

30. Perhaps this "white" is used in the usual sense, that is, as equivalent to civilized, since he finishes by saying that he wears clothing.

large, with a red forehead. He wears clothing. He makes noise in the forest. However, he does not do harm to anyone." In general they all affirm that he is very dangerous, and that his appearances are very frequent. Many claim to have seen him or heard him, and on various occasions.

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• 776 [797] Some alumni of the Salesian Mission who have already attended pontifical functions at which the Celebrating Bishop wears a miter said that Boraró appears with a miter, and the noise that he produces is precisely with the miter, which he opens and closes.

[115] A native from Parí-cachoeira, José Barreto, tells that his father, Mandú, not baptized, affirmed (1949) that the "demons" are few and that he had learned this from his own grandfather who had never seen any Missionary. He also said that his relatives, inhabitants of the igarapé of the onça /jaguar/, yai-sa, know the poison with which they can chase away or kill Boraró and that for this reason they have no fear of him at all.

*[192] In other places there are likewise individuals with such power, and for this reason they are called Boraró dohãrá, that is, those who cast malefice on Boraró (dohasé, malefice, poisoning). It is the belief of many that Boraró, upon drinking these poisons, will die.

*[192] Boraró is married, concluded Patrícia Vasconcelos, and his wife has one normal breast, but the other one is exaggeratedly long. According to others, it is Boraró's mother who shows this anomaly, and they nickname women with long breasts Boraró paxkó (mother of Boraró).

c) Bisiu or Juruparí (31).

[115] *[192] [184] 31. A little informant from Iauareté finished by clarifying that Bisiu is Juruparí. According to a legend narrated by the pajé Vicente Rodrigues, Taryana, O'ĩ-kõ is called Yaperíkuli in Taryana and is the brother of Bisíu; the latter being bad and the former good. In the Arwáke legends, Bisíu is identified with Juruparí.

/332 cont./

776 He is, said Casimiro Sampaio, a mysterious being "who descends from above. He is yellow and appears decorated with arara *[192] feathers. He speaks, sings, and dances the mĩrĩ (32).

32. Our informant, Casimiro Sampaio, finished by saying that it is the dance of the Jurupari. Bisíu, then, is confused with the great Wãx-tĩ of the legends.

He makes a great deal of noise and eats people. The women cannot see him."

776 We learned from various other informants that Bisiu eats
881 women on the occasion of the first menses: "amõsé baásamĩ," that is, he eats the menstruum, as they express it. A Pirá-
756 tapúya widow, Maria José (in Parí-cachoeira, 1954) clarified
*[192] that "to eat" means that he fecundates the woman. It is for
[115] this reason that she must be shut up in the house, and she herself will call for the services of the pajé or Komĩ for the so-called "rite of initiation" (cf. VIII - 1, b (7)). These personages, with their rites, have the power to ward off the danger for the maiden.

776 A girl of the Tukano tribe from the Papurí said that the
829 Makú women, who almost always live in the interior of the forest, many times become pregnant from coitus with Bisiu.

/333/ d) Nãxkã Wãx-tĩ (Wãx-tĩ of the forest) (33).

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33. Nãxkã means mato /forest, wood, thicket/ in Tukano.

He is also from the forest, stated Casimiro Sampaio, -- tall in stature and ugly. He wears long hair, and butterfly wings on his face. He does not speak and does not do harm to anyone.

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776 [115] A young woman with a Wanana mother, and raised among them, told Patrícia Vasconcelos that on the occasion of a mourning feast among the Wanana, when they were doing the traditional dances with masks, a man climbed up on a column of the maloca. With great fright he saw, amidst the dancers, a strange personage who had appeared: he was a short, stocky, ugly man, full of butterflies over his body. That same young woman further described that Yaperíkuli (personage from the Arwáke legends and father of Kóay or Juruparí) has a very small body, but legs so long that he can reach the top of the trees where he gathers honey and fruits.

[115] e) Õ'mõãro Wãx-tĩ. Wãx-tĩ from above, this is what his name means. According to Casimiro Sampaio, he resembles a monkey. "He lives in the trees. He does not speak, but he makes noise like that of a stone that falls. He devours whole men, swallows bone and all. When he wants to do it, he lets himself drop from the trees and the demons come out of his belly."

A Tukano girl from S. Luzia (river Papurí) claims not only to have heard such noise, but moreover to have seen the deep hole that was formed in the ground by the fall of õ'mõãro Wãx-tĩ, who has arms many meters long.

[115] According to another Tukano informant (Dorotéia Brito): "He resembles the sloth. He is tame and her mother saw him many times. Nobody, however, has managed to kill him."

The Amazonian fauna has strange specimens, some already known by the scientist and the caboclos; others perhaps still unknown (34)

34. In 1945 on the road from Urubucuara to Ipanuré, some women engaged in transporting the volumes of cargo of the Mission heard a great noise of branches that were breaking, and they saw from the back a figure like a large monkey, of about two

*/333 cont./

• 776

/footnote 34 cont./ meters, walking erect. Frightened, they ran to the side of the Salesian, Mr. Manoel Crescini, who was directing this transportation. Upon arriving at the place of the noise, the Missionary verified large tracks in the sand of the road, similar to those of an elephant, of an animal that had crossed the road and, upon penetrating into the forest, had broken the branches, and thus opened a passage of about a meter or more in width. A loud and frightening noise, like that of an animal breaking branches, was also heard by the Missionary Bishop Dom José Domitrovitsch in Barcelos. A hunter from Barcelos (Rio Negro), terrified, told Dom José of having heard /this footnote is continued on the next page in the original source/ frightening howls in the forest about twenty kilometers from Barcelos and of having seen tracks in the sand, measuring approximately half a meter. The Bishop wanted to verify the statement and was able to see these tremendous tracks, similar to human footprints. This same Prelate saw an enormous monkey in the forest in the environs of Parí-cachoeira (river Tiquié). Taking it for some Indian, at first he did not want to hit it with a shot, and the animal immediately fled.

and seen only by the natives. The mentality of the latter /334/ easily associates such strange or deformed animals with the Wãx-tĩ and other spirits of the legends. Perhaps these beings, Nãxkã̃ Wãx-tĩ, Õmãro Wãx-tĩ, and others about whom they talk to us, such as Wãx-tĩ Biu, Tsakopáe, etc., are only rare or exotic and frightening animals. We know, for example, that they call some butterflies that live in the hollows of wood Wãx-tĩ-turú, that is, piece of Wãx-tĩ.

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c) Conclusion: What to think of Wãx-tĩ and of Wá:kõ?

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In asking the Indians of the present young or adult generation who Wãx-tĩ is, they will answer at once: -- "He is the demon!" -- They will tell us about his appearances and tremendous feats, as we reported above. They will add ancestral traditions, and the laws given by him, which constitute the customs of the tribe and cannot be violated, in order not to irritate his spirit, which still survives, and incur his punishments.

On the other hand, these same Indians will say that Wá:kõ is "God." But the old ones (and some old men present whom we [178] were able to become acquainted with and listen to) know nothing about him, they neither think nor talk about Wá:kõ.

There is in these tribes a religion or cult of the spirits. They are, then, animists. There are many spirits, a true legion of them. "Wãx-tĩ maxsã" (Wãx-tĩ people) is an expression that we hear. There is Wãx-tĩ of this cachoeira, of that cave, of this igarapé. They admit wai maxsã, fish people (67),

[823]

67. There are caves near Piracuara (river Papurí, Colombia), and the natives are afraid of going in there, because of the wai maxsã.

as if they were mermaids or spirits who live /357/ in the water. 775 There are some spirits who have been incarnated, and others, not. 776 They indeed assert that the dead person is transformed into Wãx-tĩ. And they greatly fear the Wãx-tĩ of the pajés, of inimical persons, 756 and also of the civilized (because they regard them likewise as 829 inimical, and, perhaps, the greatest enemy (see note 54, VII 4, e (2, a, 3)). For this reason they are afraid to sleep where some civilized was buried, out of fear of his spirit, or of his Wãx-tĩ. They say about a nocturnal bird, called uruká-tutú, due to the [825] similarity to its chirp, that one should not imitate its chirp, *[192] because it will come, throw a stone, and do harm to the one who imitated it. This bird, according to their beliefs, is the soul of *[192] a deceased civilized person, pexká-sã wẽ'ri Wã̃-tĩ. There are good and bad spirits.

/357 cont./

• 776 It seems that we are faced with some confusion between
177 the primitive notions and the ideas that the travelers, colonizers, and Missionaries brought and even taught them in different epochs.

*192 Wãx-tĩ, we have concluded, is a general term to designate these various beings, like our word "Spirit." The term
776 also occurs in the plural, Wãx-tĩa baxsá, dance of the Wãx-tĩ. Probably it is derived from the root wax, and from the substantivizing determinative tĩ. As a matter of fact, there is in the Tukano language the root wax, which would indicate: to imagine, idea, to form ideas, model. Wax-kũ means to think, perhaps from the root wax and the verb kũ, to put.

776 Among the different Wãx-tĩ or spirits, there is one par excellence, the "Wãx-tĩ," as we say "The Supreme, Most Perfect Spirit," or simply the Spirit.

Wãx-tĩ, as follows from the Uaupés legends (which we
776 shall examine in more detail in another study, "Lendas do Uaupés
782 /Legends of the Uaupés/"), is not only a Hero of the tribe, he is the Legislator, therefore the Supreme Lord. He punishes or will punish transgressions. In order to conjure away his punishments, it is important to propitiate him with particular rituals.
*[192] It can be seen in the poosé or wãx-tĩye baxsasé, sacrifices of fish, beijú, or fruits. And there is also communion of the group in the drinking and the smoking. The lyrics of the songs, today
[533] corrupted and without meaning, might perhaps have been the sacrificial hymns (68).

[115] 68. One of the students of the Mission of Parí-cachoeira (river Tiquié), José Barreto, told that his father, one of the most famous bayá, or singers at the feasts, and dance master, had taught him that the songs during the dabacurí or poosé recalled the creation of the human beings.

/357 cont./

• 776 [533] Those inserted words and shouts are perhaps ritual words and exclamations. We thus have a cult of the deity.

Later there was confusion between the Legislator Spirit and other spirits, that is, between the Wɨx-tĩ and the wɨx-tiá or wɨx-tĩá maxsã. /358/ What could have been the cause? It is certain that religious instruction that was not very deep could give rise to great confusion, even among the civilized. It is likewise beyond doubt that they had successive contacts with the Christians, and there was not perenniality in the Missionaries' work of Christianization. Who knows but that the concept of one true God, who is Jesus Christ, the "God of the whites" (69),

[115]

69. Dr. Pereira Nunes told us of an interview that he had with an old Indian on the Ilha-das-flôres (mouth of the river Uaupés) when he found out that they were celebrating the feast of Jurupari or Wɨx-tĩ at a short distance, deeper in the interior of the forest. -- "Do you believe in the Jurupari?" he asked him. -- "Yes," he answered, "he is our God!" -- "And Jesus Christ?" -- "Jesus Christ is the 'God of the whites,'" was the answer.

as opposed to the false gods, idols, or demons, is what brought such entanglement and identification of Wɨx-tĩ with the demon (70).

70. "They have generally called him Yurupari," wrote Paulo Ehrenreich (Revista do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico de S. Paulo, 1908, Vol. II, p. 303), "solar or cultural hero, a designation taken from the língua geral and falsely identified with the devil by the Missionaries." The identification

/358 cont./

• 776

[103]

/footnote 70 cont./ of Wãx-tĩ or Jurupari with the demon dates back to the evangelization of the coastal tribes. For example, the Hollander Gaspar Barleus or Van Baerle (1647), describing the journey of Elias Harchman, apropos of a mountain of Copaóba, states: "nomen monti erat polyssyllabum et terríbile Iurupari bakau, id est, hic respéxit diábolus" (the name of the mountain was strange and terrible, "Iurupari bakau," that is, the demon looked here). Barbosa Rodrigues, "Poranduba Amazonense /Amazonian History/," p. 94. Anais da Biblioteca Nacional do Rio de Janeiro, 1882. As for the identification of Wãx-tĩ with Jurupari, see above, Note 8, VII-4, c) /see note 7 in VII-4, c), and note 8 in VII-4, d)/.

*[192] The term that the catechesis uses to designate God, Wá:kõ, which means "the one who is gone," seems to confirm it. It thus makes one think of Jesus Christ who went up to heaven (71).

71. We have just finished reading (May of 1956) in the Revista Colombiana de Antropologia, Vol. III, year of 1954, an article by Marcos Fulop, under the title: "Aspectos de la cultura tukana. Cosmogonia /Aspects of Tucano culture. Cosmogony/." This article seems to confirm the above opinion, which we had already voiced in 1948. After describing the creative activity and that of social organization exercised by Yepá Huake (this is the way the name of the personage Wá:kõ is written), according to the account of the pajé Marcos Sierra from the povoado Guadalajara, on the river Paca, in

/358 cont./

• 776

/footnote 71 cont./ June of 1953, it ends: "Entonces Yepá Huake dijo a todos los que estaban en Diawí: di pié todo el mundo. Y Yepá Huake desapareció. Y allí se terminó. Y se subió al cielo Yepá Huake." /Then Yepá Huake said to all those who were in Diawí: stand up, everybody. And Yepá Huake disappeared. And there it was finished. And Yepá Huake went up to heaven (al cielo, "to heaven," or "to the sky")./ It should be noted that the native group to which Marco Sierra belongs, as Marco Fulop has it, a group about which we, too, have some knowledge from one of our excursions along the river Paca, are dissidents from the Mission of the Montfortian Padres of the Papurí. As was to be expected, and follows from the narration obtained by Fulop, the whole account by Marco Sierra is a combination of the tradition of the tribes of the Uaupés and of the Catholic Catechesis.

776 797 They can say nothing about Waskõ except what the younger generation learned from the Missionaries of Dom Bosco and of /359/ Montfort (72):

72. It was the well-deserving Padre Pedro Kok, Hollander, from the Congregation of Montfort, who in the beginning of this century first studied the Tukano language, and, in this idiom, he left the first books of Catechesis (Catechisms, prayers, gospels, etc.). His confreres, Missionaries in the Território Nacional do Waupés (Colombia), and later the Salesian Missionaries in the adjacent Brazilian area, followed his

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 544]

/359 cont./

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/footnote 72 cont./ orientation with regard to the idiom and, consequently, also with regard to the catechetical language. When we dedicated ourselves to the present studies and sought an interview with this wise linguist who doubled as a Missionary, we learned that he had died a short time before. Of course there remained unanswered the first question that we had asked him by letter, anticipating a promised visit, that is: the origin of the word Wá:kõ. 1st. -- Would it have been of his coinage? And, in this case, would it be derived from the verb wá:, to go? Had he adopted this word (properly speaking, it is the singular Masculine Past Participle of wá:) to indicate Jesus Christ? Why should it be given as the translation of the word God? It is certain that the natives of these tribes have absolutely no idea of the divinity; why did he not adopt, in his catechesis, the Latin word Deus (or Spanish Dios) for the new concept that he was going to teach, as he had used so many Latin or Spanish words (Virgo, gracia, pecado, Santu, Anjo, misterio /Virgin, grace, sin, Saint, Angel, mystery/, etc.)?

2. -- Did wa:kõ come from a confusion of his with the legendary personage O'ã-kõ?

On a second trip that we made to the Papuri in 1948, we expressed to the veteran Montfortian Missionaries, Pe. Humberto Limpens and Pe. Afonso Kuipers, the opinion that we explain in these pages and about how it seems to us that "Wá:kõ" meant "the one who is gone," that is, Jesus Christ, who went up to heaven. And we verified that both of them were of the same opinion.

/359 cont./

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• 776

/Footnote 72 cont./ When they repeat an idea that the Catechist made them nearly learn by heart, the children of the Mission schools say Wá:kõ. In other circumstances they say O'ɨ-kõ, especially those who have already left the schools years ago. This verification, which dates from our first trip to the Uaupés (in 1947), is what put us in search of the history or legend of O'ɨ-kõ (and which today we also possess recorded in the voices of two xamãs /shamans/), and what led us to infer the dilemma: either the natives are identifying the God of the Catechesis, the Christian God, or, more concretely, Jesus Christ, with the legendary personage O'ɨ-kõ; or, perhaps, Padre Kok, with an imperfect knowledge of the Uaupés legends, thought that O'ɨ-kõ was the God of these tribes and, because he did not observe the pronunciation very well (perhaps because of poor pronunciation by the informant), he began to write erroneously Wáke, as it appears in his books.

*[192]

It is to be noted that the Christian natives who gave God the name of Wá:kõ make up a feminine Wá:ko (thus Goddess) to designate the /this footnote is continued on the next page in the original source/ Most Holy Virgin, Mother of Jesus, and the plural Wá:mãra (Uaupés Wá:mãna), gods, in order to indicate the Saints. The Bishop of Manáus, Dom Frederico Benício Costa, in his interesting "Carta Pastoral" /Pastoral Letter/ (Fortaleza, Ceará, 1909), remarks on p. 166 that the caboclos of the Rio Negro, who spoke the Língua Geral, also used the name Tupana to indicate the Saints, and, when they wanted to distinguish them from God, they called the latter Tupana uaçú.

/359 cont./

797 they do not think about him nor are they interested in him. The
776 conclusion would be, not that they do not know God and do not worship him. But that they do not know Wã:kõ, that is, Jesus Christ, the "God of the whites." They only know, fear, and worship Wãx-tĩ, the Legislator who punishes their transgressions, permitting them to have misfortunes, sicknesses, lightning bolts.

771 /360/ This is what we were also able to conclude from a
[115] conversation with an old Indian, almost one hundred years old (1947), Casimiro from Ipanuré.

f) Their rules of conduct -- Magic practices.

The native is convinced of the existence of extrahuman or mysterious forces, both personal and impersonal or cosmic, which can be useful or harmful to him, and which it is possible for him to dominate and take advantage of. This is what is understood by magic, considered subjectively.

The entire life of the natives is, for this reason, filled with so many positive and negative prescriptions (73)

> 73. These prescriptions, or rather, prohibitions, forbidding one to enter a certain place, to look at, to touch some object or person, is what is today called tabooism.

proceeding from this belief of theirs: or, in other words, it is saturated with magic practices. This is magic considered objectively.

Here and there we have indicated some of these magic practices; there are many others, however. Due to the number of superstitious practices that have come to our knowledge (and how many others might there be?), due to their frequency and application to the most common events of each day, perhaps it would not be an exaggeration to conclude that the mentality of the Uaupés Indians is dominated by the magic fears and beliefs as if this were an obsession, and which, naturally, is reflected and manifested in a large part of native activity.

/360 cont./

771
*[192] The evil that can come from an event, an action, a person, animal, or thing is called wé-boxátise, or wá-boxkátise.

The magic practices can be divided into groups: practices related to places, to things, to animals and to persons.

We shall first indicate some of these superstitious or magic beliefs.

1) Superstitions and magic beliefs.

• 776 Some of their beliefs have been revealed in connection with various subjects. At this point we have collected others:

a) There is a general belief in the existence of the wai maxsɨ̃ or "fish people," as literally translated. They not only admit that people can be permanently or temporarily transformed into fish, /361/ but they also cite episodes of such transformations, with indication of the names of persons, the place, the date, and other individualizing circumstances. On certain occasions such persons again assume their human aspect.

They affirm that the botos /boutos/ (cetaceous mammals of the Delphinidae) are "people," "maxsɨ̃"; and that on many occasions they appear in the form of handsome young men, in order to have sexual relations with the women, especially with the unmarried maidens.

Not infrequently the female botos appear in the form of seductive women, in order to attract the young men. When such apparitions happen at night to the young men and women, it seems to them as though it was only a dream; nevertheless they actually happened, asserts the Indian.

*[192] The headless snake (Cecilidae) or two-headed snake (Lacertidae), ðxsó, as is said in Tukano, may appear as a pleasant young man and fecundate the women. See the legend of ðxsó. But it is not only a matter of an event that happened in the past (and they admit it with the certainty of a historical event), it can still happen, and, therefore, the women avoid looking at the two-headed snake, in order not to feel its attraction.

/361 cont./

776 823 b) Tamanduaí is a locality situated on the bank of the Rio Negro, in an elevated position, with the bank forming a barrier or slope. They affirm that in the vicinity of this point, but deep in the water, is located the city of the wai maxsã.

776 539 823 They tell that, a few years ago, a woman lived on the bank opposite Tamanduaí. Soon after delivery, against the traditional prescriptions, she cooked and ate cará /yams, Dioscorea/. Later, upon going to the landing place, she saw there a young man, who asked her: -- Why are you there ? -- I want to go away, the woman said to him, because my husband is very rough and often hits me. -- Come with me, the man invited her. And he took her into the water. There, in the depths, she saw that there was a large city with pretty houses, factories of thirst (!) /Port. fábricas de sêde/, and also gardens and forest. She stayed there, living with this young man. On a certain day, she told him: -- I am longing for my son, I am going to get him. The young man took her out of the water. She was covered with algae. She washed herself well, went to her own house, prepared milk (!) for the son. Then the husband asked her: -- Where have you been all this time? It has been a week since you went away. She, however, did not answer him. On the following day she took her child and went to the landing place, went into the river, and did not return again. She remained as wife of the young wai maxsã man.

c) We further heard another episode told about Tamanduaí. A young man from the Uaupés, settled in Tamanduaí (and there are many who, /362/ searching for better lands, leave the Uaupés and go to settle in this region of the Rio Negro), left one day to go fishing. He was going down along a large beach. At a certain moment he saw, at the edge of the nearby forest, a very pretty hammock, and, sitting in the hammock, a blonde girl, very beautiful, with a child in her arms and singing in order to put the child to sleep. The youth paid attention to the harmonious song and could hear that is said: -- "I am

776 /362 cont./
539 going away to my land, it is so beautiful... nothing is lacking
823 there"..., etc. He looked closely and saw that the cords of the hammock were sucuruju /anaconda/. At night the blonde girl appeared to him in a dream and told him: -- "Today I sang for you, and it did not please you."

776 d) Near Bela-Vista, on the river Uaupés, an alumna of
787 the Mission of Taracuá dreamed at night that she had amorous relations with a young man. Then in the morning, when she went to take a bath, she saw close to her a blowing bouto, throwing itself about in the water, agitating it, and wanting to have relations with her. The young woman also heard shots under the ground, smelled the perfume that the "bouto" youths use. She even felt a desire to go to live with the boutos forever.

776 5. /sic/; e)/ -- Patrícia Vasconcelos tells that her grand-
[115] mother was still a young woman when she went looking for turtle
[222] eggs on a beach near Pinú-pinu (river Uaupés) with other girl companions, among them one who had just finished the puberty initiation rite. They started to dig in the sand and found many eggs. At a certain point, however, the sand started to sink with a great noise, and the newly initiated girl disappeared. A little later the sand reappeared. The mother of the maiden who had disappeared went to look for her, shouted everywhere, but the
[192] maiden never returned. The poor mother then understood that the waĩ maxsã had stolen her daughter: "waĩ maxsã mĩsa-wapã yõõ maxkõ-ré, the fish people came to get my daughter."

2) Magic practices.

823 a) Places. -- There are places (the most remote parts of the forests, caves, headwaters of the igarapés) where they should never go. If by chance they pass in the vicinity of these places, they will turn their faces to the opposite side.

There is a lake below the Ira-igarapé (middle Uaupés); the old ones did not look at it, in order not to have a weak and whining child.

562 /444/
881 The rite ends with a bath of the dawn, Wáwa-'kãsé, which
783 makes us think of the bath of the dawn of the men at the feast of
*[192] Wãx-tĩ (VII-4, e (2 b); cf. Legend of the seizure of the mĩrĩã instruments). A procession of these women who have been asso-
ciated with the rite, perhaps also other close relatives of the
*[192] maiden, is organized. In front goes the pajé, smoking the path
• [776] with a piece of cooking pot, Ki-pu-tõ koró, with hot coals, pitch /Port. breu, a kind of resin/, and pepper, and he will exorcise the river, throwing in it the contents of the pot, in order to "chase away the beast that is in the river" (81).

81. They explained that this beast was the piraboto /bouto/. Now such a mammal does not exist in the upper Uaupés, much less in the small igarapés. We are thus confronted with a transplanting of beliefs and legends.

562
881 The mother pushes the daughter into the water, and everyone will
785 take a bath (82).

82. Wallace (o. c.) further brings in here a detail which was not confirmed to us. It is the following: "When this time has passed (one month), the relatives and friends of the parents, who are invited for this, gather there on the designated day, each one of them bringing a piece of cipo (flexible climber). The girl is then taken outside the house, completely naked, to the center of the group, which is in the yard in front of the dwelling. Each one of those present on this occasion is obliged to give her five or six strong lashes with the cipo on the chest and on the back, crosswise, until she falls prostrate, unconscious, this sometimes resulting in her death; if,

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A woman is active until the moment her labor pains begin. I have seen a pregnant woman leave for her manioc garden behaving as though it were an ordinary gardening day, and return later in the afternoon with a newborn baby. A man is forbidden to be present at the birth of his wife's first child. At her first childbirth a woman is attended by her mother-in-law. In subsequent parturitions she may be unaccompanied, but if she does not feel too strong she invites her mother-in-law or any other woman to accompany her. A woman about to give birth must alert her husband so that he will not leave the house or do anything strenuous that would interfere magically with the delivery and the safety of the infant. The Cubeo give no particular reason for having the child born in the manioc garden. They reveal only a general apprehension that if the child were born in the maloca something would go wrong. Not all children are born in the manioc garden. In bad weather, or at night, a woman settles for the rear plaza as a birth site. Occasionally outside birth is too dangerous and the woman then retires behind screens at the rear of the maloca. The point the Indians insist on is that a child must not be born within the domain of the men. The infant must be brought from the woman's domain and installed by proper ceremony in the male domain. There is a parallel here, I believe, in the bringing in of a wife from her community to that of her husband.

Difficulties in childbirth are attributed to demonic agencies and require the assistance of a medicine man. Human sorcery does not affect childbirth. The common supernatural enemy of the woman in labor is the boa constrictor. When a woman dies in childbirth it may be explained that she had copulated in her garden at one time with a boa. The boa then comes to fetch his child. If he sees that it is a human child after all, he is angered and carries away the mother.

Childbirth (*pwäntadjü*: making a person) is a dangerous period. First the mother and then the infant are subject to supernatural perils that must be warded off. Little can be done, the Cubeo believe, to protect a woman in childbirth. The magical safeguards for the child, however, are elaborate. Primary responsibility for the safety of the newborn infant rests with the parents—with the father, in particular, since it is he who has "made" the child. Some of the precautions begin well before birth. Extra coitus, we have observed, adds to the number of children. Twins, for example, are regarded as a misfortune. Some said both twins are put to death and others said only one, the last to emerge being the one to be killed. Twins may also be born if the father, during his wife's pregnancy, has eaten plantains. If at this time he should greedily break off a bit of manioc

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10

The Mourning Ceremony

Mourning for the recent dead provides the setting for the most complex and most important of Cubeo ceremonies. These ceremonies, known collectively as *óyne* (weeping),[1] usually take place as late as a year after death, preferably during the dry season when the pupunha palm is ripe. I attended two mourning ceremonies, one among a *Bahúkiwa* subsib and one, a very elaborate affair, among the *Hehénewa*. The last I witnessed from the very beginning.

The *óyne* consists of two parts: a long, three-day section, followed about a month later by a one-day concluding ceremony at which the spirit of the dead is finally evicted from the community.[2] During the first part, masked dancers impersonate many of the familiar beasts, birds, insects, and fish, as well as the mischievous spirits of the Cubeo world. These spirit beings come to mourn, but mainly to turn the people from grief. On this occasion the tribal "grandmother" and her consort, in the form of two great bark trumpets, also arrive to mourn.

Koch-Grünberg, reporting on the same group of *Hehénewa*, says that the trumpets are called *Uménahonkũ* (Dragonfly) (1909, II, 151). He was not aware that the name referred to a *Hehénewa* Ancient. There are several possibilities to be considered in accounting

[1] Also *oíwinu* (weeping affair).

[2] There are also abbreviated one-day ceremonies for women, children, and men of small extended joint families. The three-day ceremony is most appropriate for a headman.

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for this contradiction. One is that different Ancients are represented at different times. This possibility, though, is one that was never mentioned to me. The origin myth of mourning, it should be noted, refers to *Xudjiko* only. The other is the possibility of error, since Koch-Grünberg also labeled a trumpet used in initiation ceremonies as *Uménahonkũ*. *Oýne* and initiation trumpets are never the same.

The dances, rituals, and dramatic representations of these first three days range over a variety of themes, but all have the common purpose of transforming grief and anger to joy. In keeping with the characteristic pattern of Cubeo ritual that begins slowly and solemnly and ends in frenzied disorder, the first phases of the *ôyne* also start from the dark mood of grief and anger and end in a sexual orgy. This first part of the *ôyne*, in which the emphasis is upon transformation of feeling, is largely dramatic. The second part of the *ôyne*, that lasts from late afternoon until the dawn of the following day, carries forward the theme of emotional transformation, ending in fact in true sexual license, when men are privileged to copulate with their sib and phratry brothers' wives. Its main themes, however, are religious and magical, including the aforementioned expulsion of the spirit of the dead as well as the magical absorption of the substance of the deceased into the body of the sib. The latter is presumably accomplished by pounding the exhumed limb bones of the deceased into a powder and mixing them with chicha, which the men of the sib drink.

The women are weepers and have, in the main, a passive ritual role. They huddle together with their nursing infants in the rear half of the house that for the occasion has been partitioned with a six-foot-high fence of poles and leaves set so as to form at the center an overlapping slit opening. The women are not allowed to see what is going on in the male section, while the slit opening allows the men to dance freely in and out of the women's section. Stimulated by masculine-initiated activity, the women burst into fits of ritualized weeping, their only active ritual role. Their proper role is to be acted upon, and to be brought to a point of ritualized sexual excitement so that they can be engaged in ritual and simulated coitus.

The masked dancers represent the nonhuman world of beings, the beneficent and malevolent, the threatening and the ludicrous, as well as the neutral creatures. Their songs (*kwimaiwũ*) are mournful and indicate grief for the deceased, but their dances and dramatic representations are of their own world. Each mask generally has its own song and characteristic dance, although the connection between mask, dance, and song is not rigidly kept. As the ceremony reaches

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its inevitable crescendo of excitement and disorder, dances and songs are interchanged.

In the course of the ceremonies, the relationship between the nonhuman world of the masked representations and the people, represented by the women, becomes increasingly more intimate, culminating, as we have already noted, in the total intimacy of coitus. The spirit of Cubeo ceremonialism is generally Dionysian. In religious excitement the Cubeo achieve a desired and temporary dissolution of the segmentation and conceptual separatenesses in normal social and religious life.

Koch-Grünberg (1906a), who observed part of an *dyne* in 1903 among the *Hehénewa*, saw in the masked dances two themes, an appeasement of evil spirits and fertility rites. My own information does not agree entirely with this interpretation. It is a fact that several of the masked dancers represent malevolent beings; the jaguar, that is the embodiment of the dreaded sorcerer, the butterfly, that symbolizes the act of sorcery, and the *abúhuwa* or forest monsters, that devour human victims. In addition the masked dancers represent the dung beetle and the vulture, eaters of offal and carrion. These creatures represent to the Cubeo the facts of death. Except for the *abúhuwa*, who are not taken too seriously, the most common agency of death is to the Cubeo a particular human enemy. Evil sorcery can be warded off by particular magical means. The masked dances, however, are not magical means for warding off danger. They are, rather, dramatic rituals whose purpose is to generate a frame of mind in which the fact of death is confronted and made to appear natural and tolerable. By coming to the house as guests, to dance, to sing, to drink chicha, and to "copulate" with women, the masked creatures are made to appear, finally, as a friendly part of the Cubeo world. The malevolent creatures are not singled out, but appear in the context of the whole ensemble of masked dancers.

As for the fertility theme, this has been a cherished cliché of earlier anthropology that promptly labeled any ritualization of sex as "fertility rites." The situation is more complex. The dancers do indeed represent male potency, but the simulated coitus emphasizes rather the carnal aspect of sex, for it is the older women, possessing the privilege of obscenity, whom the masked dancers "attack sexually."

THE MASKS

The dance masks of the Cubeo are made of a white bark cloth called *tówü* (tree bark), which is also the name by which the masks are generically known.

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532 masks are generically known. Koch-Grünberg (1906a) has argued
114 that they are sacred, citing as evidence that after the ceremonies the
778 masks are burned. Many masks, however, are spared at the insistence of children who wish to play with them, and some masks are spared and used as storage sacks. Sanctity, I would say, is attached to individual masks, and is the sanctity of the being represented and not of the mask itself. Women, it is true, do not handle the masks, not out of taboo but rather out of the feeling that the masks are in the masculine domain. The masks represent spirits who are called generically [776] [756] *takahédekokü* (bark-cloth spirits). These spirits are visible only to the shaman.[3] All masks have a common basic shape, a large triangular sack that fits over the head and covers the body to the knees. Armpits are always cut out, and sleeves that come below the elbow are sewn in. The bottom of the skirt is stiffened with a circular hoop, and sleeves and skirt are hung with bark fringes. The masks have a head section, a middle section, and a bottom part. The head section is ordinarily painted with a face design that has eyes and a nose but not necessarily a mouth. Two eye holes and a nose hole are sometimes torn through for the wearer's convenience and do not correspond to the painted design. In some masks the head section is soft and in others it is surmounted by a calabash, painted brown or black, depicting a skull top; or the calabash itself has a face design painted on it and depicts, therefore, the face. The middle section is divided into several panels, half of them at the front and half at the rear. Each panel is painted in a geometric pattern that depicts the characteristic body features of the being that is to be represented. Fish, for example, have scale designs, and birds and flying insects wing designs. These designs are painted with great care by men who are particularly proficient. They follow traditional forms rather casually, however, each artist giving his own interpretation. The Cubeo do not quibble about the details of design. The fact is that no one can identify a particular representation with certainty without knowing who has made it. Only some of the masks, such as Jaguar, Butterfly, and *Abúhuwa*, are distinctive enough to be immediately recognizable. These masks, incidentally, also seem to be the most important.

532 The use of ceremonial masks is common enough in South America,
171 as Professor Alfred Métraux (1948) has observed, but we have as yet little information as to their meaning, nor do we know their full distribution. What is certain, though, is that masked cults have

[3] Koch-Grünberg (1906a) has observed that while the animal represented may be harmless, the spirit itself is magically powerful.

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174 larly, they have adapted harvest and demon cult ceremonies to an-
535 cestral cult rites. Evidences of religious syncretism are important in
532 interpreting a complex ceremony. Thus, the fact that the mourning rites commonly begin during the pupunha season and the fact that at one point in the ceremonies the men pelt the roof of the house with pupunha fruit to "frighten the women" must be evaluated in the light of the possibility that we are dealing with a portion of a foreign ceremony, incorporated in the structure of the *óyne*. Cubeo ancestral or initiative rites also include "harvest festival" elements. But in these, as in the *óyne*, the harvest theme is a minor one.

MASK REPRESENTATIONS

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765 Dr. Koch-Grünberg, in his travels through the Vaupés region, collected some 50 different mask representations. My own observations along the Cuduiarí covered 30. Altogether, there is now a combined list of 62.[1] Since the masks are intended to portray *all* the living creatures of the Cubeo world the number of masks is potentially vast. No one ceremony uses them all. There are, however, key characters that are most commonly represented. These are Jaguar, Dung beetle, Carrion vulture, Butterfly, Aracú fishes, Eagle, Sloth, Parrot, Dragonfly, Minnows (who are not masked but are an important element in the ceremonial dramatization), *Pyénkü* (a small black fish), Frogs, and a variety of cannibalistic ogres or forest demons, the *Abúhuwa*. Informants would not say which of the masked representations was most important, presumably because invidiousness is, to the Cubeo, in poor taste. Judging, however, by their prominence, I would say that Jaguar, Butterfly, *Abúhuwa*, Dung beetles, Carrion vulture, and Aracú fishes were most important, more or less in that order. Except for the aracú, the esteemed fish of the region, these creatures all have an association with death. The jaguar is, of course, the dreaded sorcerer. The sorcerer is called *yavi* (jaguar) and the Cubeo regard any jaguar as likely to be either a sorcerer or a sorcerer's dog. The morpho butterfly with its beautiful blue wings is a creature of sorcerers and of evil. The information Koch-Grünberg received was that the morpho butterfly (*tatárako*) lives at Yurupari *cachoeira* on the Vaupés, where he brews malaria in a calabash and strews it over the land (1909, II, 181). I did not hear this account, but I was told that when a sorcerer is cooking a brew that will kill a victim at a distance the morpho butterfly appears and encircles the pot. Finally, it falls in and is consumed and at that moment the victim dies.

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[1] See the end of this chapter.

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sumed and at that moment the victim dies. The Arawakan tribes in the region call him *Makálu* and regard him as the chief of the masked dancers. The *abúhuwa*, of which there are several types, are grotesque forest ogres, a menace to the hunter whom they lead astray, tease, or kill, and the bogy man of the children. It was not my impression that the *abúhuwa* were deeply feared. They represent, rather, a caricature of human fears. The dung beetles (*keratamówa*) are literally devourers and cleansers of decay. They are, as Koch-Grünberg observed, good spirits and guardians against dangers. The carrion vulture (*kavá*) is simply a literal representation. The aracú represent the ordinary world that is neither good nor bad.

The masked dances (*wahómu*: bark-cloth tree) are mimetic, each illustrating some distinctive gesture or movement of the being represented. The songs, on the other hand, are not readily translatable, but many do mention the name of the being. As for the masks themselves, they are recognizable either specifically or at least by class by such distinctive design motifs as wings, fish scales, feathers, and jaguar spots, as well as by characteristic features of over-all design. The intent is clearly to represent the being with some directness.

The jaguar masks have a design of yellow spots outlined in black and in red that covers the entire surface including the facepiece. In some masks the spots are distributed evenly and in others they are divided into fields. The jaguar sleeves are made of a coarse brown bark cloth that seems to be associated in the Cubeo mind, judging by how they use it, with more violent feelings, a point I shall deal with later. The jaguar dancers carry a jug whistle upon which they produce the deep *hoo hoo hoo* sound of the angry beast. The whistle is a short length of ambauva palm set into a pottery dish made expressly for the purpose. The pot is enveloped in brown bark thongs that cross the opening, where they are fastened to the whistle, thus allowing the instrument to be held with one hand. The entire pot is hung with bark fringes. The dancers move as a pair, sometimes holding hands and sometimes separately. As all dancers do, the Jaguars begin with a slow, stately walk, and then move into their characteristic movement. Legs held close, they spring forward and then back, sounding their booming *hoo*'s during the walking intervals. They follow a circular movement in either direction. The Jaguars have an important role in stirring the assembly, particularly the women, to the desired state of frenzy. They are almost always on the floor. They begin wild and are capable of increasingly more violent actions. The Jaguars are always men in their physical prime. At some time during the ceremonies all the mature and vigorous men will have

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danced the Jaguar. During the early part of the *óyne*, when proceedings are still orderly, the Jaguars and the Butterflies form an appropriate ensemble, the latter dancing in front of the Jaguars. Later a calculated disorder takes place. At this time the Jaguars tear the bark fastenings from their jug whistles and distribute the tough brown material to all the men to chew on so they may become "as strong and fierce as the jaguar." The jaguar song I collected is different from that recorded by Koch-Grünberg, but variations are common. Thus, when Koch-Grünberg saw the Jaguars among the *Hehénewa* they were not using jug whistles, while the Arawakan tribes were. The song I recorded was:

yavirárü yavirákü [repeated]
yavirárü maníka
yavirárü ya
ho ho ho o ho.

Like all mourning songs it had a slow rhythm and a hauntingly mournful tune. The Cubeo offered no translation. *Yavirákü* means "big jaguar," and *maníka* may mean "children."[8] Koch-Grünberg collected a similar jaguar song among the Arawakans on the Aiarí River, whereas the song he recorded among the Cubeo is curiously quite different and does not even include the descriptive name *yaví*. There is good reason to suspect that these songs are widely exchanged.

The mask of Butterfly (*Tatárako*) is marked by triangular wing designs. The headpiece, moreover, has attached to it winglike structures made of bark cloth stretched over a frame of splints. The headpiece, which, like the Jaguar, has no facial markings, is built up around basket work to give it a bulbous appearance and to identify it with caterpillars, beetle larvae, and the sloth. A mask photographed by Koch-Grünberg has, in addition, an antennae-like strip arching forward over the face. The Butterflies also dance in pairs, often holding hands. Each holds a calabash in one hand and a stick in the other with which he strikes the calabash violently. This gesture imitates that of the sorcerer striking the pot into which the butterfly will fall. Their characteristic step is to run forward quickly and then take several slow steps back like the flight of the butterfly. Sometimes they drop to their knees to imitate the creatures resting. The song I recorded had the refrain *kaviré kaviré* and is not the same as that recorded by Koch-Grünberg on the Aiarí.

Koch-Grünberg observed nine types of demons or ogres, including

[8] The Cubeo term for children is actually *mandwa*. The term *maníka* may be a song transformation. However, this translation is very uncertain.

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a dwarf pair, several pairs of giants, a great owl demon, and two kinds of *abúhuwa*. I saw three *Abúhuwa*. The *Abúhuwa* are made to appear grotesque. Their masks are of coarse brown bark cloth and, unlike any other dancer, they sometimes wear bark-cloth trousers. One Indian said to me rather maliciously, "They are like the white man." One of the *Abúhuwa* not wearing trousers had large flapping breasts of bark cloth and was a "wife." The headpiece has a calabash to form a face painted with human features. The masks are intended to be as grotesque as possible. Since the *Abúhuwa* act clownishly, they induce in the spectators only mock alarm. The *Abúhuwa* have 765
no song of their own and no fixed dance. They are free to improvise. 535
There are two kinds of improvisation: wild when young men im- 532
personate them, and listless and lolling when acted by old men. While [533]
the Jaguars act to build up a sense of violence, the *Abúhuwa* work to create disorder. Thus, no masked dancers will enter the women's quarter through the rear or women's door except the *Abúhuwa*. They burst in through the rear door, hopping in short strides as though they were on pogo sticks. They interfere with dances and perform a number of amusing skits.

The Dung beetles (*Keratamówa*) are a pair. The masks have a white facepiece with a pair of eyes, or sometimes with no features at all. The body design includes the wide bars of the insect's body flanked by lozenge designs on each side. The headpiece is surmounted by a short hourglass-shaped tube of splints and bark cloth. They dance holding hands. Each holds a short stick. In a dance Koch-Grünberg saw, they pushed along another stick on the ground in imitation, he noted, of their work as cleaners. I saw them holding their short sticks before them like wands. Their dance is a slow move- [533]
ment, forward and back. The songs recorded by me and by Koch- [114]
Grünberg are not the same.

The Carrion vulture (*Kavá*) wears a mask with human features, although Koch-Grünberg saw one that he described as "naturalistic." The main design consists of very large lozenges (to depict the large feathers of the bird) flanked by horizontal bars suggesting outspread wings. The Carrion vulture carries a short stick held against the back of his neck, its ends extending over his shoulders, where his upraised hands hold it in place. The dancers bow gracefully from the waist to suggest the bird's soaring flight.

The Aracú (*Borikakü*) are usually represented in their several varieties. The headpiece is built up to a high peak made of splints covered with bark cloth in an hourglass design. The Aracú dance slowly, in pairs, and hold hands. Each carries a ten-foot pole bear-

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765 182 614 [615] ing the early stages. In the later stages, after the drink, the narcotics, and the general excitement have taken effect, the sib units disintegrate, so to speak, and the entire gathering becomes one generalized melee of phratry mates. The Cubeo do not call attention to the symbolic significance of the merger of sib identities; but that a mixing of the sibs is a desired result seems evident enough to an observer. For as long as the sibs maintain their separateness the mood of the *óyne* is solemn and decorous. The point of mixing is also the point 765 614 532 of desired disorder. As a unit each guest sib is responsible for preparing a number of masks (as well as other ceremonial objects) and for representing them in song and dance. To my knowledge a sib has no fixed prerogative to a particular mask or group of masks. It is [203] free to make any it chooses. Presumably there are preferences, although when the host issues the invitations to the *óyne*, he or his messenger negotiates the masks that each sib is to prepare. If the purpose of the negotiation is to ensure that all the mask beings will [533] be represented, that purpose is not always fulfilled. However, if a [535] mask is not present, the spirit being it represents can still be enacted [776] by the appropriate song and dance, for while the Cubeo do believe that a mask has a particular character they are not dogmatic about it. Masks and spirit beings are interchangeable.

765 535 152 The masked dances follow neither a precisely fixed sequence nor a precisely patterned ensemble, although they do follow a general order that is familiar to all. Since the principal sequence is one of mounting emotional intensity, it follows a natural course as the ceremony proceeds. The dance groups respond to one another. An ensemble is formed more or less spontaneously as one group of dancers stimulates others to join it. In the same way, the emotional level set by one group of dancers influences all others who follow.

MYTHOLOGICAL BASIS OF THE *ÓYNE*

765 539 The Cubeo tradition of the *óyne* is as follows. There was a time when people did not die and there were then very many people. One morning a boy followed his sister into her manioc garden and copulated with her. In the afternoon the girl returned home and told what her brother had done. The people beat the boy and drove him out. He wandered about in the forest for three months feeling ashamed. He could find nothing to eat and so he returned home very thin. He entered the maloca and, speaking to no one, lay down in his hammock and died. His own people did not mourn him but said,

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"*Dekókü*[7] has punished you." Then other people came and wrapped the boy in his hammock, put him into a large jar, and buried him in the house. No one wept. After three days an old man began to think what people should do about death. They decided to have an *óyne*. They made dance masks. At first they did not know how to make bark cloth so they made masks of leaves. *Kúwai* came and told them this was not good. In one day *Kúwai* made all the bark-cloth masks for the people. They did not know how to paint the masks and *Kúwai* showed them how. They gathered red pigment and carbon soot, and by midday the masks were all finished. *Kúwai* climbed the duka tree. At the top he cut off the bark and brought it down to make the fringes for the skirt and sleeves. The people then divided the maloca into a men's and women's part. In the men's part an old woman sat down to sing. But soon the real *Xudjiko* came along singing and the people were frightened. But *Kúwai* said, "Don't be afraid. This old woman is *Xudjiko*, who has come to help you weep." The old lady ran away and *Xudjiko* took her place. Then *Kúwai* said, "When other people die do the same thing. Weep for a short time only." He told them to dance and sing. When they had finished *Xudjiko* went away. She no longer comes. Instead they make a horn.

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Xudjiko and her consort live at Uaracapuri, the source of the Cubeo. They were the first of the Ancients to die and they were the first to make the bark-cloth masks. The headpieces of the masks are set with feathers; the most prominent vertical feather is said to represent *Xudjikü* and the most prominent horizontal feather is said to represent *Xudjiko*.[8]

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RITUAL THEMES IN THE ÓYNE

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The five main sets of characters in the *óyne* each represent then one major ritual theme: the women represent weeping; the masks, the concern of the living world for the deceased as well as for the living; the minnows, the boisterous character of young men;

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[7] The term means "ghost" or "spirit" but it has here the connotation of "Great Spirit." However, since I did not learn of a Cubeo belief in a Great Spirit the allusion is puzzling, and is to be considered as unexplained.

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[8] The apparent inconsistency between this account and the previous one referring to *Kúwai* illustrates two strands in Cubeo mythical thought. One strand, nonancestral, focuses on *Kúwai*, a figure of the Arawakan tribes. The other strand is ancestral and is, perhaps, truly Tucanoan. The Cubeo do not reconcile both strands. The question of which version is produced depends on the context, which may be either general or ancestral.

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765 775 266 114 Koch-Grünberg had described to him in 1903 (1909, II, 152). I observed the *Hehénewa* headman, with the older men of the sib around him, pounding bones in a mortar and adding the substance to an urn of chicha. When they saw me they angrily ordered me away. Later, informants denied knowledge of what they may have been doing. Koch-Grünberg, however, was told by the *Hehénewa* headman that the limb bones of someone who had died some 15 years earlier were cooked for about a month, reduced to ash, and then added to a special corn chicha which was then taken by all old men and women and by parents of more than three children. I did not observe the drinking of this chicha, nor did I hear of the custom during my stay among the *Bahúkiwa*.

765 824 783 775 Finally, the younger men of the sib burn dry capsicum peppers in the maloca to drive away the ghost of the recently deceased. Thereafter, the deceased is to be forgotten and his name not mentioned for at least another generation.

532 765 776 **MASK REPRESENTATIONS IN THE *ÓYNE***

Anthropomorphic Beings or Demons

1.	*Makuko*	(K-G)[a]	A bearded dwarf, represented by husband and wife. They lure hunters from their game and pantomime shooting a bark-cloth monkey with a blowgun.
2.	*Kohako*	(K-G)	Husband and wife giants who carry clubs and strike down hunters with them.
3.	*Hailako*	(K-G)	A giant who carries two heavy clubs, one in each hand.
4.	*Palutxiko*	(K-G)	A giant.
5.	*Anauako*	(K-G)	A giant.
6.	*Abúhuwa*	(K-G;IG)[b]	Forest demons.
7.	*Hokoaboxoko*	(K-G)	Giant tree demons.

[a] Reported by Koch-Grünberg.
[b] Personal observations by the author.

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171 184 266 765 fine powder and mixed in several large conches (vats made of hollow trees) of caxiri; this is drunk by the assembled company till all is finished; they believe that thus the virtues of the deceased will be transmitted to the drinkers" (Wallace, 1870, p. 498).

Endocannibalism has also been reported by Coudreau, who has observed that the Tucanos and Tarianas no longer follow this practice, which he attributed only to the Cubeo. "Ce ne sont plus aujourd'hui les Tarianas et les Tucanos qui boivent la cendre de leurs morts, comme le disait Wallace. Ce sont les seuls Cobbéwa. Les gens de cette peuplade enterrent leurs morts; puis, quand les chairs sont pourries, ils lavent les os, les dessèchent, les brûlent, les pilent et, dans les dabucuris, mêlent cette poudre, précieusement conservée, au cachiri avec lequel ils boivent, en s'enrivant, les cendres des leurs ancêtres dont ils s'incorporent ainsi toute l'energie. Cette étrange boisson leur procure des délices extatiques ou furieux" (Coudreau, 1886–87, II, 173).

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8. *Veluliaboxoko* (K-G) A giant demon, killer of fish, who is actually the carara bird, a great devourer of fish.

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Birds

9. *Murukutuko* (*pupuli*) and (K-G) The owl. Has a mask covering only the head. Holds a torch in one hand and a stick in the other and jumps up and down in imitation of the owl jumping from branch to branch. Regarded as an evil devourer of people.

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11. *Kavd* (K-G;IG) The carrion vulture.
12. *Miavi* (K-G;IG) The eagle. The mask has a white facepiece with an hourglass frame surmounting it.
13. *Kolapilabo* (K-G) A small prey bird.
14. *Kulika* (K-G) A bird of the parrot family.
15. *Vekó* (K-G;IG) A bird of the parrot family.
16. *Kobauako* (K-G) A bird of the parrot family.
17. *Olo mo oko* (K-G) The aracua.
18. *Umanami* (K-G) The tem tem (*Tachyphonus*).
19. *Yolouevu* (K-G) Swallows.
20. *Pinikabokũ* (IG) A small white bird.

Fish

21. *Borikakũ* (K-G;IG) The aracú.
22. *Máwayo* (K-G;IG) The red mouthed aracú.
23. *Avali* (K-G) A small aracú.
24. *Pyénkũ* (IG) A small black fish.
25. *Ihiabolũ* (K-G;IG) A small fish.
26. *Haima* (K-G) The yaudia.
27. *Batakahaima* (K-G) The black yaudia.
28. *Auaholabo* (K-G) The colored aracú.
29. *Iyudyo* (K-G) A small aracú.
30. *Emiwa* (IG) Minnows.

Insects

31. *Keralamówa* (K-G;IG) Dung beetles.
32. *Talárako* (K-G;IG) The butterfly.
33. *Maka* (K-G) A bird catching spider.
34. *Pekú penkũnkũ* (IG) Beetle larvae.
35. *Budyauobo* (K-G) The leaf bug.
36. *Bobobo* (K-G) The house spider.
37. *Umánahonkũ* (K-G;IG) The dragonfly.
38. *Malakaibo* (K-G) A large night butterfly.
39. *Bobako* (K-G) A small night swarmer.
40. *Kumatidiauo* (K-G) A caterpillar.
41. *Tadyiwa pikoa* (K-G) A caterpillar.
42. *Kohidiveko* (IG) The cockroach.
43. *Himáuwa* (IG) Caterpillars.
44. *Utáwe* (K-G) The firefly.
45. *Henohenóri* (IG) The bee.
46. *Utcikũ* (K-G;IG) The wasp.
47. *Kubuwa* (K-G) Sand flies.

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Religion

The religion of the Cubeo has no gods and therefore no worship. Anthropomorphic beings are plentiful in the form of forest monsters, fish, beasts, birds, insects, not to mention the *Bekûpwänwa* and *Kúwai* the transformer. But the Cubeo do not approach these beings and spirits in a supplicatory mood. They establish, rather, a mode of communication, of intercourse, with them, in the course of which specific results, the warding off of dangers, and the positive benefits of body growth and sib growth are expected to follow. Religious attitude must almost inevitably be modeled upon the experiences of relations among people. In Cubeo social life, as we have seen, one neither commands nor submits. People enter willingly into a relationship that will accomplish a specific end. A social relationship among the Cubeo, as we have repeatedly noted, demands a specific atmosphere of feelings, sentiments, emotions. To the Cubeo nothing of consequence can result from an act divorced from its proper mood. In precisely the same way, the Cubeo seek to establish a relationship with a supernatural being.

The Ancients, to recapitulate what has already been described in another context, join the people in drinking, dancing, smoking, and chewing coca. They come to whip the boys and men to make them grow and to give them potency and force in the initiation rites. They are bathed with in growth "magic." As *Xudjiko* and *Xudjikû* they come to mourn for the sib dead. In the mourning ceremony they are invoked by name only and do not appear. The invocation chant, how-

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769 ever, does not compel them to make the sib child grow. The Cubeo think it absurd to suggest that the *Bekûpwänwa* might need any urging to do for the sib what needs to be done and what they are capable of doing. It is impossible for a Cubeo to say that the *Bekûpwänwa* have withheld a benefit or that they can be made to do more under
771 some circumstances and less under others. What is required – and the
769 Cubeo do not say that the *Bekûpwänwa* have set requirements – is
787 that a proper mode of social intercourse be established and maintained. The spirit and the manner of social intercourse must be correct, however, although not letter perfect. The spirit in which the social intercourse is carried out is more important than the ritual act. Many Cubeo ceremonies are abridged because, as they explain, the mood was wrong. Guests who should have come did not, and in the feeling of disappointment the ceremony is cut short. An error in a chant, in a dance, in a song, or in a ritual sequence is of no importance. Failure to conform to the rules of social intercourse with the
771 supernatural beings, such as the Ancients, may have serious conse-
769 quences only if the neglect is deliberate. In any case, *Bekûpwänwa* do
784 not punish. They only withhold. In the case of the boy who ran away from his whipping at the hands of the *Bekûpwänwa*, my informants assured me that he would not be deprived of a year's growth. Since they, the elders, were prepared to forgive the youngster his uncontrollable timorousness on this occasion, the Ancients, they knew, would do likewise.

771 The Ancients are not referred to as "spirits." The term for spirit
769 is *dekökü* and has, for the Cubeo, a more alien connotation than the
• [776] term *Bekûpwänwa*. The Ancients or the ancestors are referred to by name so that association with them conveys directness and immediacy. I believe that it is for the sake of maintaining a sense of immediacy and of directness with the *Bekûpwänwa* that the Cubeo do
[778] not place them in some ancestral abode in some other world. The Ancients, to be sure, are known to have been buried in the ancestral rocks from which they emerged, at the rapids of Uaracapuri and Yurupari. But the burial place is not their place of abode. Strictly speaking they have no place of abode. The flutes and trumpets that embody them reside in a *caño* near the main stream of the sib. The
[775] Cubeo do not, however, claim that these sacred crypts are the residences of the Ancients. The ordinary dead, on the other hand, do have an abode. The point of distinction for the Cubeo is that the ordinary dead have been sent away and are no longer welcome, whereas the Ancients, who are not spirits of the dead in the ordinary sense, are always welcome.

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Apart from the Ancients there is *Kúwai*, who has been referred to here as a culture hero and as a transformer. He is not, as Koch-Grünberg called him, a "god." The Cubeo and the Arawakan tribes in the area share *Kúwai*. Among the Cubeo he is a mythical being who has long since withdrawn from any relationship with people by taking up a specific abode upon the high savannah. There are no rites involving *Kúwai* today, nor are there traditions that refer to any sacred relationship between the people and *Kúwai* in the past. *Kúwai* taught the Cubeo all their useful arts – fishing, cultivation, the making of all major implements. He instructed them in copulation. Illustrative of Cubeo attitudes toward the sexes is *Kúwai*'s constant difficulties with women – all human – and, by contrast, his orderly relations with Cubeo men. It was, as the legend narrates, his disappointments and frustrations in dealing with Cubeo women that led *Kúwai* to take up what is virtually a voluntary exile. *Kúwai* as transformer altered terrain features and created some smaller rivers. His role as creator is a limited one.

Some Indians did speak of a god whom they called *himénihinkũ* (my little soul). This god lives in the sky (*kawáno*) in a house with his wife. He accepts good people into his house and puts bad people in a house for dogs. There is *Uménahonkũ*, an Ancient, but *himénihinkũ* is evidently a Christian doctrine that has been badly understood by the Indians of the Cuduiarí, whose relations with missionaries have been very marginal at best. Those Indians who had missionary contact attributed *himénihinkũ* to Christian teaching and rejected the doctrine as alien to them. They scoffed, particularly at his role as a creator of the world and of man. A fundamental feature of Cubeo religious thought is its reluctance to grant broad and extraordinary powers to any being. I shall return to this point.

Earlier writers on the Indians of the Vaupés have without exception reported "gods," "demons," or a "great spirit" called *Yurupari*. In simple fact there is no *Yurupari*. The term is jargon from the trade language of the Amazon based heavily upon Tupían and is used indiscriminately by the Indians to refer to anything that is sacred and taboo. In the Northwest Amazon region the sacred trumpets and flutes receive the designation of *yurupari* most commonly. But the people will put off any prying into their religion with *yurupari*. I never heard the *Bahúkiwa* refer to *yurupari* except when talking to some white man whose questions they did not regard seriously.

The ancestor beings represent for the Cubeo the only true beneficent "supernaturals" with whom they have relations. But we note that they are not credited with extraordinary powers. They do not

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771 move against other powers or forces. That is to say, the Cubeo know that growth, potency, and fertility are part of the ordinary scheme of things and that there is no force conspiring against such ordinary developments. The *Bekûpwänwa* are not thought of as jealous, sensitive, threatening, or likely to take offense. It is noteworthy, too, that the emphasis in growth is upon the individual far more than it is upon the more abstract concept of sib. The Ancients will not guard the people against any unexpected dangers. To guard against menace, whether general or specific, there are specific measures that the sibmen themselves must take.

771 All other anthropomorphic beings in the Cubeo cosmos are either
776 menacing, mischievous, or harmless. Menace from supernaturals, however, is relatively moderate, not to be minimized but lacking in dread. The only menace that truly frightens the Cubeo is that which they attribute to persons.

776 The *abúhuwa* are cannibalistic forest monsters, the bogy men of the children. At the mourning ceremonies they are made to appear grotesque and absurd and hence harmless. There are many stories of human encounters with *abúhuwa* as ogres. In most, the *abúhuwa* are overcome. They can be outwitted, caught, and killed.

The story is told of an old woman alone in the maloca with two young children. *Abúhuwa* entered the house and the children were able to escape by climbing up to the house beams. But the old woman was caught. An *abúhukü* rolled her between his palms until she became all soft and he sucked her out from the top of the head in the way a Cubeo child eats a banana. He hung her skin over the branch of a tree. When the others of the maloca returned they saw an *abúhuwa* family within. They set capsicum afire at the door of the house and as the *abúhuwa* sought to escape its acrid smoke, that is noxious to all unwanted spirits, they struck them down with clubs and killed them all.

Another tale is told of a hunter who, in the woods at night, was seized by the throat from behind. It was an *abúhukü*. He struggled with it and killed it with a knife. In the morning he went to see it and it had taken the form of a sloth. *Abúhuwa*, it is said, are all very [754] hairy. Their armpit hair makes a very potent sorcery "poison." Any man who is bold enough may seize an *abúhukü* and tear his armpit [821] hair. It is said that the ogre can be seized only when the moon is in eclipse or is red and low in the sky. The hair must be from the left armpit and can be cut only with a corn husk. It is cooked until reduced to ash, and then is mixed with water and allowed to dry to a paste in the sun. The paste is kept in a small gourd dish sealed with

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beeswax. When enemy *Maúnwa* attack, the paste is thrown among them, causing them to fall stupefied to the ground. It is the shaman, however, who can contend with these orgres most successfully. The *abúhuwa* are frightening to behold, the Indians say, because they have two faces, one in front and one in back. Some have sticky bodies and when they embrace an unwary victim he can no longer escape. A mother and child are favorite targets of these *abúhuwa*. The mother is killed and the child is reared as one of them. It in turn then seizes people. Female *abúhuwa* have a preference for men and the *abúhukũ* tries to catch a woman.

Nyáma abúhuko (Deer ogre) is a black ogress, an evil spirit of the deer, who catches children wandering about alone. She tosses them into the air so as to break their necks and then and there eats them.

Another ogre is *Opómbibekũ*, a dwarf with an enormous penis, who flies about at night, seizes little boys, and eats them.

Kómi is also an ogre, one who emerged with the first people. Eventually people caught him and burned him alive. They then noticed that whatever came near his ashes died. Sorcerers still go to fetch his ashes for their "poisons."

Snakes, the boa and anaconda in particular, are dangerous to women. The land boa rapes women in their manioc gardens so that they give birth to snakes. The water anaconda attacks menstruating women who come to the river. A menstruant is endangered by land snakes, too, but can ward them off by painting with genipa. Nothing, however, will protect her in the water. The water anaconda is a threat to a newborn child and to its father as well. This menace, however, is easily counteracted by the simple magical techniques of the old men. The dangerous anaconda is the white anaconda and not the ancestral black anaconda, which is regarded as friendly "because he knows his people." He is not venerated and is not the object of ritual although he is represented in petroglyphs on the Cuduiarí. In the old days, I was told, he was kept as a household pet but for sentimental reasons only.

The river is also the home of the *muápwãnwa* (fish people), who are anthropomorphic spirits. They are small people who live in a house beneath the river and move about at night, sometimes brushing moistly against travelers and frightening them but otherwise harmless.

The fish, who are of great importance in Cubeo ceremonials, not only in the *áyne* but in their own fish dances and fish songs by which the Cubeo celebrate great catches, are a "people." They, too, live in a house and have a chief, *Munyúnbekũku* (Old man *munyún*), a

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776 mythical fish with a mouth that has the lower jaw of the puño and
825 an upper jaw shaped like the beak of a parrot. Should a menstruant enter a canoe he will break it to bits. The Cubeo do not say that their fish ceremenials are for the purpose of promoting success in fishing. Their view rather is that when they are happy with a catch of fish they enjoy dancing with them. Increase magic may underlie the Cubeo relationship with fish. But if it does they either no longer recognize the instrumental motive or else they refuse to acknowledge it.

825 As with the *Bekũpwãnwa*, the Cubeo relationship with the animal
771 world is largely one of establishing proper social relationships. In such relationships compulsion is out of place. In the animist world view of the Cubeo the entire animal world is communicant with the world of man. Some relationships, as has been noted, are dangerous, and therefore stand out in a special category. Among the dangerous relationships is that of the jaguar. Since the jaguar is identified with the shaman, it is more suitably discussed under the heading of shamanism. There are birds, such as a parrot called *bauvẽko* and marũku monkeys, who are feared because they are foretellers of misfortune. For the rest, and with the exceptions noted previously, the relationship between man and the animal world is casual and friendly. On the river, as we have already observed, the Indians address birds and fish by name. Their intense interest in domesticating animals of almost every variety as household pets must also be considered as part of the effort at communication of a concrete form.

825 The birds, *miwa*, are friendly spirits. They emerged, it is said,
776 from Uaracapuri with the Ancients and were originally in human form. The birds are the planters of fruits and berries and are their
[273] guardian spirits. They are appropriately at the same time the guard-
[532] ian spirits of intoxication, a bird with a corn-cob body and wings of
[765] a manioc tray fragment presiding in that capacity over the *diyne*.

The luminary *aiyá*, who is both sun and moon, is a more distant
776 anthropomorphic spirit.[1] The Cubeo interest is in the moon, the li-
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[1] The doctrine of *aiyá* as both sun and moon is mythological only. It does not mean that the Cubeo do not distinguish clearly between these two bodies. *Aiyá* refers to the anthropomorphic being whose activities are actually in moon form; it refers also to direction. East is called by the Cubeo *aiỹádaino* (*aiyá* [the sun] is coming). West correspondingly is expressed as "*aiyá* is going." To express time, however, the sun is referred to by the particular name of *handwũkakũ*, an anthropomorphic form that has, however, no anthropomorphic connotation to my knowledge. *Handwũ* refers to time in the abstract, while *handwũ koriko* (sun in the center) means "midday." All specific times are given by describing the position of the sun in the sky. The word for "day" or "daylight" is *hánan* and is apparently based upon the verb root *ha* (to see). The Cubeo disclaim any anthro-

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bidinous nocturnal hunter, and not in the sun. The sun, they say, is merely the moon giving heat and light during the day, "when people need it." As sun, *avyá* lacks anthropomorphic character. The interest of the Cubeo in the moon rather than in the sun seems related to their concept of nightfall as the sacred time. Almost all ceremonies are night ceremonies, whereas daylight is the time for work. Apart from his erotic role the moon is a hunter with a stone-tipped spear (*temúdjo*). Bits of the blade chip off which the finder can use as potent sorcery magic, killing his victim by poisoning. The moon is also an opener of graves of those who eat a seed the Cubeo call *óthai* and which is used as fish bait. The Cubeo tell the story of the man who hoped to steal the lamp of the moon (*djuwaibo*) by covering it with a pottery dish. Some light showed and *avyá* secured the lamp to the back of his neck and flew off.

When there is an eclipse of the moon, the Cubeo say that the spirits of the dead are being dispersed. They also fear that the moon is dying. As the moon reddens I have witnessed them running about shouting to one another in genuine terror that the moon is dying. They believe that those who live in the direction from which the eclipse shadow is moving will die. The moon sickens of the same sorcery afflictions that beset humans, although they do not believe that one of their medicine men has the power to sicken the moon.

HUMAN SPIRITS

The soul is called *umé*, which also means "breath" and "breeze."[8] As a spirit entity the soul is referred to as *umémakũ* (or *umémako*). The soul leaves the body during dreams, returning as the dreamer awakes. The *Bahúkiwa*, at least those with whom I discussed the subject, did not believe that the *umé* might fail to return and so cause death. Death and illness result, they insisted, from something entering the body. At death, the *umé* leaves the body permanently, journeying after a suitable interval to a nearby river, dwelling of the spirits. After death the *umé* has human form. It can be heard talking and can be seen by the shaman. The spirits of people who have been adulterers, uncooperative, breakers of the bonds of ritual friendship, or in any other way markedly unsocial assume an animal

pomorphic beliefs about the sun. Linguistic evidence suggests also that the concept of sun and of time is built around the notion of visibility. Thus, direction, having nothing to do with visibility, is based on the *avyá* form.

[8] Koch-Grünberg (1915–16) also noted *umédde* (pulse) and *umédade* (heart). I believe that the connotation of the term is revealed by the verb *umédeai*, which means "to get up," "to rise."

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tious and no longer attack people. The *yaví* has his distant method of killing and is feared for that. But even this fear, strong as it is, is as nothing compared with the fear of the nonprofessional sorcerer. The arts of sorcery, which include the arts of poisoning, are known to all men and are believed to be used by all men. What restrains native fear of the *yaví* is the Cubeo conviction already referred to, that mischief must be motivated by understandable feelings of anger, envy, hatred. In theory, the *yaví*, being outside the human pale, may act from motives not understood by the victim. But in fact, the Cubeo find it difficult to envisage this, and they seek to account for how a victim might have stirred up the animosity of the *yaví*. They console themselves with the thought that as long as they avoid trouble with the *yaví* they will be all right. Among the nonprofessionals, on the other hand, they have no difficulty in locating motives.

The *yavís* use esoteric means for killing at a distance. First they send a frightening dream of death as a warning, and follow that with objects such as have already been mentioned which are "shot" into the victim's body from a distance. Some use a method of killing that my informant said was introduced by Indians from the Rio Negro in Venezuela. Known as *dokübéwoinu* (dirt killing), it causes a slow and anguished death, and is used mainly as a retaliation against death from sorcery. The shaman takes from the corpse of the victim parings of nails and bits of foot callous, scurf from behind the ears, a bit of forelock hair, fingernails and toenails, and scrapings from the teeth. All this is mixed with boiled capsicum. When the brew is heated the intended victim suffers stomach cramps. It is brought to a boiling point and allowed to subside and the victim's pain subsides also. Boiling continues for three days. On the third day the medicine man sits over the pot and sings, commanding his victim to eat parts of his own body. The *yaví* accompanies his instructions with gestures. The victim now vomits continually. Then the brew is boiled vigorously and the medicine man does a staggering dance around the pot. His victim staggers and bites his tongue. Now, the spirit of the victim appears over the pot in the form of a butterfly. Caught in the vapors it falls into the pot. The medicine man immediately breaks the pot and the victim falls to his death. He has been made to eat his teeth, his penis, his testicles, and his fingers. What I have described is the short method of killing. The long method lasts ten days, during which time the sorcerer calls on his tutelary spirits, each of which is known as *ihékowakü dekókü* (sickness-bringing spirit). The *umé* of a sorcerer is never human; it takes the form of an insect or of several

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754 278 824 682 at the Isana River. This is so potent that only the smallest amount will kill. The poisoner carries it under the fingernail of his index finger held in place with pitch. He may flick it into a calabash of chicha or drop it on a stool, where it will enter the anus of a victim and kill him within a month. The symptoms are headache, fever, stomach cramps, constipation, and wasting. The following tale accounts for the origin of *pend*. There was a drinking party on the Isana River and the people were dancing with *Bekûpwänwa*. Suddenly *Kómi*, a short, fat man, flew into the house on two sticks. He caught a little boy and ate him alive and then another. The people became angry and tried to beat *Kómi* to death with clubs. He said to them, "If you shed my blood you will all die quickly. If you kill me in the house you will all die quickly." *Kómi* told them to take him to a creek called *Manánkanihye*, where they were to build a fire and throw him in. They did this and *Kómi* was reduced to ashes. Every bird and insect that flew near the fire fell into it and was burned. When the fire cooled, a little boy took some bone ash, although his father had warned him not to touch it, and dropped some at the canoe landing. An old man passed over it and immediately fell sick, then another. They tried it on animals and saw it was a good "poison." It comes to the Cuduiarí from Arawakan Indians by way of the Querarí.

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278 824 Curare (*himá*) is known as a powerful poison that may be used only in war and not as a secret potion.

751 As a far from effective prophylactic against all poisons that may be administered at drinking parties and other group gatherings, the people wear as pendants packets made of a leaf called *hutcûdû*, that gives a certain amount of protection against sorcery and poisoning.

75 776 789 791 The attitude of the Cubeo that human malevolence is difficult if not impossible to guard against must be contrasted with their optimism when it comes to dealing with nonhuman spirit beings. Thus, it will be recalled how the spells and "blowing" against the spirits that threaten the newborn infant can be safely entrusted to any sib elder; he need not possess special powers, only the knowledge. The technique of "blowing" has, oddly enough, full magical efficacy in the hands of the layman but is altogether uncertain when used by a medicine man. The point, of course, is that the layman uses simple magic against a manageable nonhuman adversary, whereas the medicine man is called in to pit himself against a formidable human adversary. The human adversary is formidable in Cubeo eyes for two reasons: it acts out of directed passion and it is devious. The nonhuman spirit world, by contrast, is stirred up to a generalized anger.

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The river anaconda is angered at newborn children and at menstruating women but not at any particular child or woman. The anger of spirits is, finally, direct. Men are always suspected of conspiring, but nonhuman spirits never do.

Finally, Cubeo religion includes a concept of inanimate power, of power resident in substances, places, and personal states of being. I found no articulate Cubeo theory as to inanimate power. *Parikũ* is clearly personalized power and *parié* is limited in its applicability to objects intimately associated with the Ancients, the flutes and trumpets in particular. But clearly there is power in pigments, feathers, animal bones, plants, the toenail of the armadillo (which the medicine man uses to bring rain), human hair, leg ligatures, and a host of ceremonial objects. With respect to these substances it is clear that we are dealing with assorted beliefs and practices that are both old and widespread throughout the tropical forests of South America, not to mention beliefs that are close to universal.

Genipa (*wei*) is the most potent pigment. It is applied to the hands and feet as gloves and socks and is run coarsely down the back to create a deliberately crude covering rather than a design. The Cubeo are sensitive to neatly executed designs and normally take great pains with body painting, using special sticks as well as die rollers to stamp a design. The crudeness of genipa painting is to differentiate it from body decoration and to emphasize its purely magical character. Men do use genipa paint, but it is primarily a protective pigment for women and children. A menstruating woman will always coat her back with genipa as a safeguard against animal spirits. She will coat her hands with it when handling sacred substances such as coca and tobacco. Applied to infants, genipa wards off influences that might impede growth. Women say only that genipa is good for the skin, but this is typical evasiveness.

Red pigment (*monhã*) has more of a decorative function. It is applied by men and women with great care. Applied in spots it is jaguar magic to protect infants, and applied crudely it is a protection of sorts against the *yavi*.

It was never clear to me whether the love charm *pedidya*, a blossom worn in the hair, was intended to work by magic or merely by suggestion. The most effective love potions, carefully safeguarded by the women even against the prying anthropologist, are secret and magical.

Among ceremonial objects the *behõrũ* is a rattle lance some three meters long with a hollow chamber at the top in which pebbles have been placed. It can bring rain, one informant said, but it was not used by the Cubeo for that purpose.

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as though the visitor to a *maloca* is explaining his reasons for arrival while the host answers him in short phrases of affirmation. They do not look at each other during the greeting, no matter whether they are in a *maloca*, on the river or in the forest. We were continually impressed by their simple yet perfect manners. Cassava and perhaps a newly-caught fish would be brought to us when we first arrived at a *maloca*, then, without our asking, we would be shown where we could sling our hammocks.

The men have an easier life than the women. Their short, clipped speech has, like their gait, a matter-of-fact sense of urgency about it, but is punctuated by high trills of laughter when they joke and make fun amongst themselves. They are born with a sense of humour, and it is the old who suffer at the hands of the young. In one *maloca* a little boy consistently refused to let his grandfather take his afternoon siesta. To everyone's great amusement he would tickle the old man with a piece of grass, pretending a fly was settling on his body.

It would be impossible to say whether the early push of the Jesuits up the River Amazon towards the end of the seventeenth century, and the more recent incursions of the *caucheros* and the Roman Catholic missionaries on the Vaupés and Caquetá, have had an influence on Tukano thought. Certainly their beliefs are very complex. Moreover, the Tukano live in an area as far from the Amazon as the Hebrides from London, while the first direct missionary contact with the Upper Piraparaná had been made by Padre Elorza only the month before we arrived.

Besides believing in some vague all-powerful good spirit or god, the Indian believes in many lesser spirits, both good and evil, all of which have a great influence on him and to a large extent rule his life. The good spirits can be recognized in the pleasant things of the forest. They are represented by fruit trees and plants – bananas, pineapples and other edible fruits, and coca too; the various trees used in making the *malocas*; the cool and clear forest streams. Whereas the poison in manioc, the twisted creepers and roots which trip weary hunters, and the jagged rocks in rapids which split canoes – these are evil spirits.

Apart from this animistic belief, the Indian believes in an immortal soul – at least in some cases, for he acknowledges the existence of spirits of the dead, usually his ancestors. The spirit of a living man wanders only when he is asleep. The shaman on the contrary can divest his body of the spirit at will and glide through the jungle in the guise of a puma.

Indian life is greatly influenced by this fourfold world of the spirit – the monotheistic spirit or god, the animistic spirits, the ancestor spirits and the detached living spirits, and it is the evil ones who hold the greatest sway over a man's life.

Usually the men are called after birds, and the women after plants and

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weeks to carve into the hard rock. It is possible that some in the past represented boundary marks. The Indians do not appear to recognize territorial areas within the forest, but they may have rights to fish over certain sections of the rivers. 172

It is unlikely that the engravings can be ascribed to any one period and there seemed little resemblance to contemporary Indian art. Certainly Tukano design is mostly limited to triangles and crosses, and relies more on colour than form. The most striking example we saw was the Tatuya *maloca* on the Piraparaná, the bark front wall of which was covered with a series of cross, square and triangle designs coloured with brown, yellow and white river clays and a black charcoal compound. But this is by far the most dramatic example of Tukano art, with the possible exception of the elaborate body painting and the magnificent head-dresses used during the festivals. Their pottery, though finely made, bears no design, except for a pot containing the narcotic *yajé*, used only by the elders during certain festivals and curing sessions. This is covered with different coloured clays, charcoal and red *karayuru* dye. Similar triangular coloured designs are also found on the *yarumo* dancing-staves. 531 532

The most common type of engraving is the fretted design on the gourd maracas used during tribal dances. One end of the pebble stave, a lance-like rattle used by the shaman, is also carved with lines and triangles together with a pattern of bird feathers, said to give it greater magical power. This stave and a drinking gourd with an elaborate circular design of triangles, loops and chevrons, we tried to obtain for our collection, but without success. Certain articles were so highly regarded by the Indians that they would not part with them, no matter what they were offered in exchange.

Of all the rock engravings we saw, that of Ni the river god (see drawing on p. 31) was by far the most striking. Travelling on from Kaperwa, we came to an unusually long set of rapids through which we guided the boat with our paddles. We were concentrating so hard on the rapids and the water swirling around the boat, that the unexpected sight of a pyramid of rock jutting massively out of the river in front came as rather a shock. Even more unexpected was the grotesque figure cut deeply into the granite face of the giant boulder. With arms and legs outstretched he seemed to dominate the river, to embrace it with a hypnotic spell. 532 776

Unlike the other carvings we saw, Ni was engraved in granite. The finely-drawn lines, carved half an inch deep, gave symmetry to the life-size figure which must have taken an Indian craftsman months of labour to create. Our own steel knives were easily blunted by the hard crystalline rock.

Ni faced upstream into the setting sun. Behind, on the east slope of the rock, were suns and a quarter-moon. The suns, some with emanating rays, were composed of a series of three or four concentric rings up to two feet in diameter.

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115 Hitherto José had remained silent and appeared to know nothing of these engravings nor had he given us any indication of their whereabouts. This was surprising, for, being himself a Barasana, of a Tukano clan, he was presumably aware of their existence. Then one evening, perhaps encouraged by our curiosity, he told us the following anecdote:

101 773 796 'The Barasana have always lived here, they were born here. They and the Taiwano have always been friends and had common enemies in the Tatuya, Karapana and Ureti whom they used to fight with bow and arrows. They both have the same god who has power over all things. It is he who made Ni, in his own likeness, the drawings have been here for ever, and this is the only place where they occur. The other Indians do not have them.' He pointed to a great natural pillar of granite called the Bee, which stood in the river upstream of Ni: 'That rock was once a pile of manioc, which the people had placed there. Ni turned it into stone. Below the rapids is the underwater cave, his palace, where the god sings to the drawings and the spirits.'

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